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Item 2 of the provisional agenda*
Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities

Declaration submitted by Foundation for the Child and the Family, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2005/100.

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Declaration regarding the mid-term review of the eight Millennium Development Goals

We, representatives of 22 NGOs, institutes and bodies from Greece **(Actionaid, ASPE, ARSIS, Medecins du monde, ELEPAP, Greek Council for Refugees, ELPIDA, Greek Family Union, Celebral Palsy Greece, Foundation for the Child and the Family, Institute of Social Policy, Institute for Child Heath, MAKE-A-WISH, The Center for Life, Family and Child Care Center, Human Rights Defence Center, Volunteering NGOs Federation, SOS Children Villages, Fair Play, The Smile of the Child, UNICEF)** taking an active part in the Greek civil society through actions that address child and family issues, as well as human rights, health, education and environment issues, have gathered in Athens invited by the **"Foundation for the Child and Family"**, to affirm:

- **our commitment** to the UN Millennium Declaration principles, emphasising on peace, security and stability, in the absence of which no development effort can be complete;

- **our determination** to join forces in an integrated approach to the MDGs and their more speedy implementation.

Sharing the vision of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan **on larger freedom** for the individual as elaborated on in his latest Report (March 2005);

Drawing from the sense of **collective responsibility** as underlined in the UN Millennium Declaration;

Acknowledging that MDGs have indeed managed to provide a human face for growth through respect for human rights; they are still, nevertheless, a long way from actually seeing problems from the point of view of the poor, whom they address, as well as from both representing and responding on their own to a concise development agenda;

Identifying a political will deficit, as despite commitments made by national governments, actual progress made in the direction of the MDGs is not deemed satisfactory;

Considering that civil society has a critical role to play in today's world;

State our views and proposals based on our activity and experience accumulated over the years on a global level.

Goal 1

As

- the issue of poverty still remains, for both developed and developing countries, more than a financial issue, but rather a human rights violation, which intensifies due to population shifts that

sustain waves of immigration and refugees, with unescorted refugee minors being the most vulnerable group

CALL FOR

- Pressure on developed countries to keep development assistance (ODA) at 0.7% of their GNP
- The establishment of an international organ to monitor and audit assistance allocation and delivery to developing countries and draw up Reports due for publication in the Press of respective countries
- Enhancing the role of NGOs to act as catalysts to combat poverty
- Specific EU actions to fight poverty, enhance coherence between trade and political cooperation and develop the common agricultural policy
- More state aid
- Attention to child poverty and implementation of the international agreement for "A World Fit for Children", adopted during the UN Special Session on Children (May 2002)
- Children to be acknowledged by all UN members as protected individuals and for crimes against children- such as rape, sexual abuse, trafficking, child labour- to be considered as crimes against humanity
- Care for children deprived of their birth family
- Special care for refugees: structures and independent social services, state agreements to be signed, unescorted minors and underage refugee issues to be included in the 2006 UN General Assembly agenda and financial support for refugee host countries with proper means for appropriate fund allocation
- More intense efforts to remove and ban landmines

Goal 2

As

- Education is a fundamental growth tool and one of the EU Lisbon strategy main prerequisites. It limits poverty and social exclusion and leads to the prevention and management of diseases afflicting mankind

- There is a problem in terms of bringing the illiteracy rate considerably down, especially for girls

- The scourge of drugs concerns school-age children

CALL FOR:

- UNESCO 'Education for all' and World Bank initiatives, in conjunction with other measures, to aim to: compulsory and free education for boys and girls, contain early school drop-outs, promote school reintegration, train personnel involved in education, improve material and technical infrastructure, promote the use of new technologies in all grades of education

- The Culture of Peace to be integrated in all education levels

- Enhanced symptomatic-type policies and a gradual transition to more holistic policies, in line with the spirit of the Lisbon Summit

- Structures for special training and support of children with family, social, mobility and learning difficulties – children- victims of domestic violence, in particular - and to train teachers and parents with a view to facilitating child acceptance in their respective social and school environment.

- Drug prevention programmes at schools, legislative harmonisation and penalties for states that tolerate drug production and trafficking

- Staffing schools with experts in the field of mental health protection for children

Goal 3

As

- Gender equality is a fundamental right as well as a precondition for balanced economic and social growth

- Women are the greatest victims of poverty

- Women are subject to discrimination in every aspect of their public and private lives as well as prejudice due to cultural stereotypes and customs

CALL FOR:

- The ratification and implementation of international conventions on human rights' protection and the elimination of all forms of inequality and discrimination

- The inclusion of the gender dimension in all national policies, bilateral and multilateral agreements on development and humanitarian assistance as well as in the educational process

- Promotion of women's participation in decision-making centres, especially UN committees or agencies for peace, as well as in the UN Council of Development Advisors, which is due.

- Support for women's initiatives for peace, i.e. " The Suzanne Mubarak's Women's International Peace Movement"

- Special attention to eliminating phenomena of violence against women

- Joblessness for women to be dealt with, in particular for those in vulnerable social groups, and measures to help strike a balance between professional and family life.

Goal 4

As

- The right to live is fundamental

- Education and support for mothers help reduce child mortality

- Giving birth in adolescence enhances the risk of child mortality

- In plans of action to combat HIV/ AIDS, poverty, trade and trafficking and ensure food safety, reference to children is minimal

- Lack of access to safe water is associated with high child mortality rates

CALL FOR:

- More national policies and NGO activity to protect poor children and provide them with healthy living conditions

- Education for women

- Global mobilisation to ensure supply of safe water and conditions of health and hygiene for schools and households

- Intense family planning along with training for health professionals, parents and teachers on this issue.

Goal 5

As

- Managing child and mother mortality is an objectively verifiable indicator for development and humanitarian assistance programs
- Poor communities in developing countries are greatly affected since they are deprived of access to health services
- Lack of sex education and family planning leads to an increase of unwanted pregnancies and an increase in subsequent risks

CALL FOR:

- Better health and hygiene conditions
- Access to health services, information and family planning centers for mothers
- More information dissemination programmes on sex education, hygiene and health protection for women, especially girls.

Goal 6

As

- A dramatically high number of people die of HIV/AIDS every year and 60% of children got the disease from their mother, while poverty and ignorance are the main causes for the spread of AIDS and other types of disease
- Ignorance and prejudice about child disease, such as cancer and HIV/AIDS, still make them a social stigma and lead to marginalisation and social exclusion

CALL FOR:

- Prioritising health issues, more upgraded funding for services, promoting educational programmes
- Increased contribution on the part of the EU and the rest of the developed countries to the Global Health Fund
- More professionals to work in the field of health and also continuous updating for them along with information for the public to help do away with prejudice

- Mental health to become an integral part of disease management programmes, i.e. HIV/AIDS , cancer, etc.

- Enhancing NGOs role in managing contemporary types of disease

Goal 7

As

- The environment is a source of human life and growth

- Developed countries are greatly responsible for destroying the environment (agreements breached, nuclear tests, mass destruction weapons, industrial and toxic waste, deforestation, irrational use of modern technology, pesticides, garbage, etc.)

- Climatic change, global warming, extreme weather phenomena and the water issue are all acknowledged as critical for the future of mankind and sustainable growth

CALL FOR:

- Pressure on governments to sign international protocols and conventions on the environment

- The UN Summit in September to promote the complete review of the social and environmental repercussions of trade liberalisation

- More equitable water allocation between rich and poor, in the framework of a strong political negotiation and good management policies

- Water supply systems for smaller communities

- Initiatives for recycling and new energy sources and incentives for such type of initiative by the State

- Environmental education to be included in all education levels

- More public information on environmental issues, especially those which directly influence public health

- More intense environmental protection, primarily close to locations frequented by children

- More severe penalties for parties involved in any form of environmental demise.

Goal 8

As

- Goal 8 is a precondition for the success of the afore-mentioned goals and calls for a global deal: developed countries must take into account not only the needs of their own citizens but also the needs of others in their policies, while developing countries ought to provide guarantees for more credibility to the citizens and effective use of resources

CALL FOR:

- More specific directions and commitment as well as resources to ensure effectiveness for Goal 8

- Pressure on developed countries' governments to cut down on and/ or write off the debts of developed countries and to have more fair trade policies

- Enhanced complementarity on the global and regional level between developed and developing countries, NGOs and international organizations, to establish bridges leading to a faster and more effective implementation of MDGs and ensure global peace and stability.

- Support for collective observation as concerns programmes abroad, to facilitate the cultural rapprochement of local communities and NGO members

- A single accreditation system for NGOs, at national and international level, to facilitate cooperation between states and NGOs.

- More emphasis on free trade and economic issues, particularly transparency and proper governance